


Northern Great Plains Fire Management		Section: Fire Suppression	Revised: 6/21/99	Number: 303
Standard Operating Procedures	Subject: The Command Function at an Incident			Page: 1 of 1
<p>I. Scope: This SOP applies to all Fire Management personnel assigned to any incident.</p> <p>II. Purpose: To provide continuity and consistency in managing the Command function at incidents.</p> <p>III. Procedure for establishing, maintaining, and transferring Command at incidents:</p> <p>General:</p> <p>The first arriving Single Resource Boss or higher will establish or pass COMMAND at any reported or actual wildland fire or other emergency situation. In those situations where an Single Resource Boss or higher is not present, the senior ICS-qualified person on the first arriving unit will establish COMMAND. The passing of COMMAND should be done "face to face", when practical.</p> <p>A. The first arriving unit will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledge arrival on scene by radio.• Provide a Report on Conditions observed. (If the incident is a fire, this should include the following: location, access, size, rate of spread, improvements threatened, and POTENTIAL [what the scope of the incident is expected to be in the near future; i.e., can the unit on scene handle it, or will it turn into a major incident involving numerous resources and many hours to mitigate.]• Confirm the assumption of command. For example: "424 assuming command", or "424 will be the Incident Commander" <p>B. The first arriving person must elect an appropriate commitment for the unit as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <u>Nothing Showing Mode</u>: The Incident Commander assumes or passes COMMAND and may go with his crew to investigate while using a portable radio to exercise COMMAND.2. <u>Quick Attack Mode</u>: The officer assumes COMMAND and may accompany his crew to take direct action utilizing a portable radio to either<ol style="list-style-type: none">(a) continue COMMAND, or(b) pass COMMAND to an incoming person. If the pass option is elected, ensure COMMAND is passed to another person who is <i>prepared</i> to receive it and will be on scene in a timely manner. Discretion must be utilized before choosing this option because the incoming person may not have as much information about the incident as the person on scene. However, at times the person on scene may be overwhelmed with the developing scene and deploying the firefighters under his or her supervision.3. <u>Command Mode</u>: The first arriving officer recognizes a working situation which requires formal COMMAND from the outset. The officer establishes a fixed command post and begins to exercise the responsibilities of COMMAND immediately. <p><i>A key concept is that SOMEONE must assume COMMAND and they MUST be available on the radio.</i></p>				